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SUBJECT: UNAMID: "BALL IS IN OUR COURT"

REFERENCE: (A) KHARTOUM 246
(B) KHARTOUM 225
(C) KHARTOUM 219
(D) KHAROTUM 184
(E) KHARTOUM 158
(F) KHARTOUM 5

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Fifty days after transition, UNAMID top officials briefed the diplomatic community on progress and challenges. UN/AU Special Representative Adada noted that a political solution is needed to resolve the Darfur situation and, while UNAMID is not a panacea, the changing political landscape made UNAMID more important than ever. Force Commander Agwai said that while AMIS' African soldiers arrived with only a rifle and a uniform, the same African soldiers will now be expected to be self-sustaining force capable of conducting long range patrols. Police Commissioner Fryer said that police are improving security in the IDP camps but more needs to be done, including recruiting additional police for the FPU's. Operations Chief Medili said that challenges remain in recruiting civilian staff and providing infrastructure. Humanitarian Coordinator Bajulaiye appealed to the international community to urge the GOS to permit the UN protective access, particularly to the IDPs. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Top UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) officials on February 20 updated the diplomatic community in Khartoum about its progress fifty days after the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) transition of authority to UNAMID. UN/AU Special Representative Rudolphe Adada told ambassadors that with the transition from an AU mission to a UN lead mission, it is the international community that is in charge of the situation in Darfur. Adada said that as a UN mission, UNAMID has successfully completed negotiations on a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) (ref B), which but has not yet reached agreement on the Non-African forces that would comprise the Troop Contributing Countries (TCC). He added that the Non-African forces not accepted yet by Khartoum (Thai and Nepalese units) comprise only 1,000 out of the projected 26,000 UNAMID military and police.

ADADA: UNAMID MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

¶3. (SBU) Adada cautioned the diplomats that UNAMID is not a panacea as the real solution to the problems of Darfur is a political one. Adada said that the current Chad and Sudan conflict has exacerbated the already difficult political situation. He said that both Chad and Sudan, notably Darfur, have a long-standing history of interference and conflict in each other's territory and that while Chad sees itself as a regional actor, it is Darfur that has historically played a role in Chad instability. He recalled that FROLINAT, the Chadian rebel group that produced former Chadian President Hissene Habre was founded in Nyala, Darfur in 1966. Blood

ties between the Chadian regime and some Darfur rebels (both of them Zaghawa) were stronger than political ties. He noted the possibility that the powerful Darfur rebel group of SLA/Unity could split between those Darfur rebels who support Deby and those who are purely Darfur-focused. Given this confusion in rebel ranks and cross-border, decades-long history of mutual interference, he reasoned that UNAMID is more important than ever.

AGWAI: CHALLENGE IS FIELDING A SELF-SUSTAINING FORCE

14. (SBU) Force Commander Lt. General Martin L. Agwai said that UNAMID successes to date include the deployment of the newly instituted Bangladeshi Formed Police Unit (FPU) which has spearheaded increased patrols in the Internally Displace Persons (IDP) camps, particularly at the turbulent Kalma IDP camp, one of the largest in Darfur. He noted that while AMIS has successfully transitioned into UNAMID, the UNAMID troops are still largely the same AMIS troops who arrived with only their rifles and their uniforms.

15. (SBU) UNAMID briefer Col. Murdo Urquhart said that in planning for transition AMIS intended to transition from being a light 7,000 troop force which did not have the capability to provide its own communication, aviation support, and operational support to a more robust 26,000 troop force capable of sustaining itself in the field, with its own UN-supplied integrated support services, communications and aviation. Urquhart said that UNAMID currently has 7,485 troops of which the largest contingents are African, e.g. Nigerian (2,906) and Rwandan (2,588). Non-Africans, with 192 troops, compose only 2.5 percent of the force, with the largest being the Chinese engineering contingent currently with 143 troops.

16. (SBU) Urquhart said that UNAMID's future challenges include

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upgrading the existing 600-troop battalions to UN standard 800-troop battalions and to develop the capability for UNAMID troops to sustain itself in the field by providing their own integrated transport, food, and to maintain their own generators and water supplies. Urquhart acknowledged that UNAMID is still in the transitional phase and there are difficulties such the problem of transitioning from AMIS communications to the UN standard communications system. Nonetheless, UNAMID has conducted more patrols, convoys now move their own fuel and supplies, and most notably UNAMID conducted verification patrols into the Northern Corridor, the road north the El-Geneina to Sirba and Abu Suraj immediately after recent fighting. He summed up UNAMID's attitude "to do the little you can with the little you have and you push forward". He added that the phase one transition has succeeded in integrating the force, setting up the HQ and transitioning from 8 to 3 sectors. The two additional battalions added in October had been a success. Failures had been the slowness of the Heavy Support Package and Hybrid units that should have deployed by December 31st, 2007.

UNAMID ENHANCES POLICE CONTACT WITH IDPS

17. (U) Police Commissioner Michael Fryer said that UNAMID's police presence has been established and is improving. He said that of the 19 planned Formed Police Units (FPU), nations have committed to provide 12, and that one FPU has been already deployed (the Bangladeshi). Seven units have yet to be identified. Fryer said that of the 3,772 planned individual police officers, there are 1,380 AMIS police officers waiting to be transitioned into UNAMID and that there are 225 UNAMID police officers. All 1,605 officers are deployed.

18. (U) Fryer said that the Bangladeshi FPU is still constructing its camp and has only been partially deployed but is having a very positive effect on the ground. He noted that its equipment arrived in Darfur only two months after the Bangladeshi's arrival in the country. He said that TCCs have pledged 12 FPUs with the last pledged contingent (Pakistani) expected to arrive in July 2008. He noted that UNAMID police are currently 95 percent African.

¶9. (U) UNAMID police achievements include FPU patrols into the Kalma IDP camp from 8 AM to 6 PM and improved relations between the IDPs, the Government of Sudan, and the various militia movements. Fryer said that UNAMID's long-term plans include providing 24/7 FPU presence in the IDP camps, establishing basic police procedures among the Sudanese police, constructing community police stations near camps to provide a safe zone for IDPs, and introducing community policing concepts. UNAMID will also try to establish police for rebel movements that have signed the DPA (SLM-Minawi and others) but these movements really don't have formal police, at least not yet.

¶10. (U) Future challenges for UNAMID policing include recruiting additional seven 140-troop FPU squads and generating an additional 1,167 individual police officers to bring them up to the mandated 3,772 police officers. In addition, UNAMID needs to transport, house and provide offices for the 11 FPUs that are expected to arrive within the next three months. Fryer noted the deep IDP mistrust of Sudanese police as a significant challenge he hoped to overcome. This is especially true at Abu Shook and Kalma camps.

OPERATIONS CHIEF: MUCH DONE; CHALLENGES REMAIN

¶11. (SBU) UN/AU Deputy Special Representative for Operations Hocine Medili said that UNAMID has undertaken a number of extraordinary steps to facilitate a quick start including transferring UN staff from other locations and expedited procurements such as the unprecedented letting of a no-bid contract for PAE. However, he cautioned that such extraordinary measures raised issues of accountability within the UN system, so some of the special measures will end on March 31.

¶12. (SBU) Medili said that UNAMID has 15 helicopters and one fixed-wing in Darfur and has an additional 13 civilian MI-8 helicopters being prepared in Khartoum. He said that the UN, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are working on improving air fields that would permit positioning additional aircraft in Darfur.

¶13. (SBU) Challenges include adjusting to overly optimistic budgetary assumptions that 70 percent of UNAMID employees could live off the economy, outside of camps. He noted that living in Darfur is harsh and difficult, housing rents are high, and there is limited office space. For example, while UNAMID has recruited only 1,597 of its authorized 5,571 civilians, there is only sufficient office

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space for 900 staff and UNAMID housing for 245. Medili said that insufficient supplies and equipment, ranging from cleaning and office supplies, furniture, and computers, is a serious problem and if even if they possessed them, UNAMID lacks sufficient hard-wall warehouses space.

¶14. (SBU) Communications challenges include deficiencies in allocation of High Frequency and Very High Frequency (HF/VHF) radio frequencies, incompatible equipment, and lack of tactical equipment. He noted that the UN usually does not provide internet and telephone service for troops, and the practice is not covered under UNAMID's self-sustainability concept.

¶15. (SBU) Medili said that additional civilian staffing is needed. He said that of the 5,551 authorized, UNAMID has recruited only 1,597 or 29 percent of required personnel. He noted that additional UNAMID housing and offices need to be constructed and that many of the staff will need to live and work in a possibly hazardous active construction site. He added that he hoped to work with the GOS to facilitate customs clearances for supplies and visa issuances for incoming staff.

UNAMID HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

¶16. (SBU) UNMIS Deputy Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator Oluseyi Bajulaiye said that UNAMID and UNMIS have worked closely with GOS humanitarian agencies, but that GOS restrictions on access and

issues of protection remain an issue. Currently, the UN humanitarian effort is focusing on the situation in West Darfur. Bajulaiye said that the UN and humanitarian NGOs sought access when GOS began its attacks in West Darfur on February 9. It was not until Feb 11 and 12 that the UN and the NGOs were able to go to the affected areas, but NGOs successfully providing food and medicine to a number of refugees. On February 18, the GOS restricted humanitarian aid flights and launched attacks against JEM rebel-held towns north of Selea, along the Northern Corridor. In the following days, between attacks NGOs were able to distribute food for 82,000 of the estimated 160,000 affected persons.

¶17. (SBU) Bajulaiye said that the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and Humanitarian Communique were intended to provide unlimited access for protection. He appealed to the international community to urge the GOS permit the UN protective access, particularly to the IDPs. He said that the situation requires 24 hour patrols but acknowledged it takes time. Finally, Bajulaiye said that the GOS has established a new procedure that promises to speed NGO document processing and had extended the Moratorium for NGOs for an additional year until January 2009.

¶18. (SBU) In responding to questions about reports of possible abductions of young boys in the aftermath of recent conflict in West Darfur, Humanitarian Coordinator Bajulaiye said that half of the displaced in the recent conflict were children, so it possible for many to be unaccounted for. He said that the UNAMID and UNICEF are working on investigating these reports that boys may have intentionally been separated from their families.

STATUS OF UNAMID CHIEF OF STAFF STILL UNKNOWN

¶18. (SBU) In response to CDA Fernandez's question on the rumored expulsion of Chief of Staff Patrick David Houston, Adada said that UNAMID received a note verbale notifying them of the expulsion but with no specific deadline. UNAMID attempted to negotiate with the GOS but the attempts were rebuffed. While UNAMID have been negotiating with the GOS on David-Houston's expulsion, he has gone on leave and has now returned to Sudan without any problems, and UNAMID remains uncertain on when or if he will go.

ROLES OF THE CEASEFIRE COMMISSION AND JMST UNDER UNAMID

¶19. (SBU) In response to questions about the status of the Ceasefire Commission (CFC), Agwai said that the CFC is currently not operational as all members of the CFC must be present at investigations and approve the report. As the JEM has been thrown out of El-Fasher, they cannot participate in the CFC. As a result, said Agwai, "the CFC exists only on paper, so we need a new way for the CFC to operate." He added that UNAMID investigates as much as it can and has conducted patrols along the Northern Corridor, the road north of El-Geneina, to the towns of Sirba, Selea, and Abu Suraj. Told by the SAF that Jebel Moon was unsafe, UNAMID did not

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attempt to patrol there, but intends to go there when in is safe (in the next few days). However, when UNAMID wanted to go to a Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) controlled area, the SAF also told UNAMID it was unsafe. Undaunted, UNAMID said it would go anyway provided the SAF agreed not to fire upon UNAMID patrols. The SAF agreed and the patrol was successfully conducted.

¶20. (SBU) Agwai noted that UNAMID's freedom of movement is still limited. The Sudanese Government is mostly not to blame. He said that the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) does not include everyone and both signatory and non-signatory movements have weapons, which inhibits overall security. In addition, UNAMID does not have the capacity to do long range patrols and cited the lack of Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) for the incapacity to venture far from their bases. To develop this, Agwai said that he intended to have a brainstorming session on ways to better implement the DPA.

¶21. (SBU) Asked about the role of the Joint Mediation Support Teams (JMST) under UNAMID, Agwai said that the JMST is part of the UNAMID

negotiating team. He said that UNAMID plans to contract with the JMST and then second them to the AU Special Envoy.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT WAR CRIMES ARREST REQUESTS

¶21. (SBU) In response to questions about the SOFA and media reports calling for arrest of individuals wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), Adada said that the use of the SOFA for the purposes of the ICC is not appropriate. He added that UNAMID is not under any mandate by the ICC.

AGWAI: WE NEED TO EMPHASIZE THE POLITICAL PROCESS

¶22. (SBU) Asked about the interaction with rebel movements, Agwai said that UNAMID is increasing its contacts with the movements, which see themselves increasingly as more military movements than political ones. Agwai said that as a priority in the next three months, he wanted to move the process forward politically rather than militarily.

¶23. (SBU) Agwai commented on the difficulties of the Sudanese political process. He said that there can be no progress without interacting with all of the parties, and that in Sudan there are simply too many parties. Unlike most peacekeeping situations where the government has collapsed giving the UN a relatively unimpeded field to work in, the GOS is one of the parties, is a relatively efficient and present government and must be consulted.

¶24. (SBU) He noted that he has been handicapped by GOS requirements for UNAMID to notify the SAF of air flight times and locations, discovering that rebels unsurprisingly fail to meet them at locations that SAF knows about. He added that he has not been meeting with the JEM but will meet with the others.

¶25. (SBU) Comment: While Adada stated UNAMID's accomplishments at the end of fifty days, he also noted the number of challenges amid a changing political and military landscape, and commented to the diplomats that UNAMID's success or failure was mostly in their own hands. The sense was of slow progress, accelerating in the spring with the arrival of additional military and police units, of Sudanese Government obstruction, brutality and lack of coordination, but also of an operation most of whose problems and limits are largely internal in nature. End comment.

FERNANDEZ